LEADERS' COMMUNITY AND THEIR MANAGERIAL DECISIONS IN THE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE DOMAINS

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Abstract: *The community of leaders occupies a prominent place in the scientific research. The role played by this type of community in decision-making within the company is less clear. There are numerous research studies dedicated to the identification of various types of communities, trying to reveal its borders, as well as explain its existence and functioning. Rare are the researches centred in looking beyond their existence and explaining their impacts. A community of leader is a new concept and little-used. This community is defined as an organization where all members maintain relations and interact mutually for a practice. In our study, we are not only interested in the existence of a leaders' community, but also the influence that this can have on the community management decisions. These decisions affect investment, as well as financing and corporate governance. The main objective of this paper is to explain the impact of new behavioural factors as mimicry, as well as organizational learning and legitimacy, on the leaders' decisions.*

Keywords: *Leader, community, mimicry, corporate governance, behaviour.*

Introduction

The environment in which a company operates is increasingly changing. This turbulence increases the difficulties and problems which a leader will face, and we can say that solving complex problems necessitates teamwork. The development of communication techniques and social relations are factors that add to the acceleration of reflection, and so, the development of exchange of knowledge sharing and broadcasts, (Ratzinger-Sakel & Gray, 2015). Similarly, the economy today is increasingly based on knowledge. An increasing share of generation process and circulation of knowledge is provided by certain communities.

This exchange and sharing of knowledge among members of an organization is due to the interaction between these factors. Maintaining a relationship and links with each other to facilitate exchange and sharing is required. According to Dupuich-Rabasse and Zarifian (2001), "interactions engender mutual understandings between views, different knowledge of meetings that are a particular source of sharing, creation within the organization and an opportunity for members to develop their skills". According to Diani (2000), these interactions are becoming more well-formed and crystallized in communities. This explains the interest of executive communities as per Tremblay (2003), where "they offer the opportunity to develop knowledge."

The communities are highlighted in sociology during the early 90s. Today, it is common to consider the emergence and development of community to be crucial for encouraging sharing, exchange, and learning. Thus, they constitute of the essential forms of social interactions to promote learning (Merindol, 2007). Indeed, communities will be a privileged place to share and develop knowledge and skills (Cappe, 2005). Given that the community supports this exchange, sharing and learning, it is suggested that a community is the place where some effects will be transferable among the members via their affiliations. Belonging to a community will influence members.

Community leaders may well-enable its members to benefit from this exchange and sharing knowledge in the process of decision-making. Both forms of managerial decisions have resulted in very abundant and extensive literature. Here, we will try to explain and provide some standards for these decisions. The determinants of decision-making has widely been the research object between the aspect of efficiency for corporate finance and the social aspect with behavioural finance, where we seek to explain why companies do not have the same decisions and second, instead of providing standards for decision-making. But, the appearance effect is one of the aspects of a leader's community for making managerial decisions which has not been researched.

As a consequence, our search finds all its legitimacy, by dealing with the relation which exists between a community of leaders and their managerial decisions. The objective of this research is to present representative variables of the key concepts and show that the community of leaders constitute of a place or effects (such as mimicry, organizational learning, and legitimacy), and consequently, can influencer the managerial decisions of leaders. To expect our goal, we proceed by answering two questions:

• What are the effects of a community of leaders?

• How does its effects act on managerial decision-making?

First, we are going to show the concept of the leaders' community and their decisions. In the second place, we approach various effects of a community of leaders (imitation, organizational learning, and legitimacy).

Leaders' community and their decisions

The concept of community, widely debated in classical philosophy, has been deemed suitable for a long time from the aspect of sociology and anthropology in Germany since Ferdinand Tönnies established the fundamental distinction between Gemeinschaft [community] and Gesellschaft [society], or, in France, where he is not, indeed, unanimous. For Keikotlhaile et al. (2015), it is clear that the concept of community shows little heuristic value to denote a specific kind of social formation, and this is not a simple "concept", but rather, it is a "sociological concept". This is a set of interactions, with human behaviours that have a sense and expectations among its members. It is not simply an action, but rather, a set of actions based on expectations, values, and beliefs, and a sense which is shared by individuals.

Communities of leaders are a special case of communities in practice (Bootz, 2013). Communities of practice are everywhere. We are all members of a number of them at work, at school, at home, or while practicing our hobbies. Some have names, while others do not (Wenger, 1998).

Several authors have attempted to define the community of practice, which, according to Brown and Gray (1995), is: the simplest level, it is a small group of individuals working together for some time. This is neither a team nor a ''task force'', not necessarily a group officially recognized or identified ... are peers in the realization of a "concrete activities". What unites them is the common understanding of this and a real need to know what each other knows. Moreover, Wenger (1998) defines this type of community as a group of individuals who have a common history, which frequently interact, share knowledge, and meet relative problems within an organization. They work together and carry out activities, some of which are common, while others are complementary. For Khorasgani et al. (2010), the goal of a community of practice is the establishment of a knowledge-sharing structure between its members, in order to allow the emergence of a collective intelligence, creating value and innovation.

On the other hand, Lesser and Stork (2001) defines this community of practice as "a group whose members share their knowledge and learn together based on their common interests." In this context Werger, McDermtt and Snyder (2002) present it as a group of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on a regular basis. Similarly, for Meignan (2002), it is a group of professionals of varying size that share knowledge, work together, create common practices, and enhances expertise in an area of common interest (expertise, skills, processes), which is the object of their mutual commitment.

These definitions allow focusing on: the sharing of interest or concern, the constant interaction between the group, and finally, the sharing of knowledge. Wenger (1998) emphasizes upon a community of practice, which is not an ordinary working group or a project team, but rather, it is a particular form of collective organization with expertise and a shared passion and "sharing experiences and knowledge freely and creativity that promotes the development of new approaches to problems." Community practices differ from business structures by their definition of objectives and means of action, apart from direct market constraints. They are based on shared values and common interests. The community members identify closely with it and are bound by the knowledge they share and develop together.

Wenger sets a table in which he groups the main forms of collective organizations, in order to see how the practices of certain communities differ from other groups of individuals.

Table 1: Comparison of the main forms of collective organizations (Wenger, 1998)

	What is the purpose?	**Who participates?**	**What is the link?**	**For how long?**
Community of practice	Develop the skills of members	Members who wish to participate	The passion in involvement and identification with the group's expertise	As long as there is interest in maintaining the group
Formal working group	Making a product or a service	Every person depend on the project manager	Work needs and common goals	Until the next re-organization
Project teams	Accomplishment of a task	The employees indicated by executive management	The different stages of a project and its objectives	Until the completion of the project
Informal networks	Collect and circulate information	Friends and business knowledge	Mutual needs	As long as the members have a reason to stay in touch

In addition, he presented communities of practice as a combination of three basic elements: a field of knowledge which defined a set of topics, a community of individuals interested in this field, and how they developed shared practice to act in the domain.

1- The field: inclusion of the community in a defined perimeter, which allows its members to benefit from their legitimacy, both towards the community itself and from outside. Indeed, the fact that a member belongs to the domain define permits and explain its contributions to the community. The membership in the domain provides to the community that each member has the background knowledge necessary for understanding the topics and issues. Moreover, a clear view of the domain limits allow the members to focus specifically and exclusively on the subjects in the domain without diverging. The transparency of the limits of the domain of reflection or action of the community allows, on one hand, to limit their stakes in the possible power between the members of the community of practice and the non-member collaborators. By the clear vision of the sphere of action of the community of practice, the non-member collaborators are not afraid that the members of the community would work on subjects which do not concern the domain directly. On the other hand, the transparency allows identifying the existence and development of skills on the defined domain, while remaining within the community of practice.

2- The community: Bernadette Chrlier (2006) clarifies that a number of people who have, at heart, the domain, are concerned by the issues in question. Participation is voluntary and takes various forms that represent different motivations:

- The desire to see the domain develop.
- The search for interaction with peers to share some important things.
- The desire to make a contribution, knowing it will be appreciated.
- The simple desire to learn.

3- The shared practice: as per Bernadette Charlier (2006), shared practice is developed by the members of the community to become more efficient every day. It includes:

- The history of the community and the knowledge developed.
- A socially defined set of ways of doing things in a specific domain.
- Common approaches.
- A shared set of standards that form the basis for action, communication, problem solving, performance, and responsibility.

In Rhône-Alpes, for example, leaders of the community were built around the theme of the management of PME. Members worked on everything related to the management of small and medium-sized businesses: organization of workshop production, management of critical skills, sharing of common indicators. At the origin of this community, there was a benchmarking vocation that evolved into a shared concern of good practice (Parot et al., 2004). From the same perspective, Peraya (2003) defines community as a place to exchange ideas and actions as well as the understanding of others' perspectives: by sharing their teaching strategies, teachers are required to clarify their daily practices and learn from their colleagues. He gives, as an example, the professional community of teachers that would place him as a discursive element, as the experience of relationships, case studies, to make an experience that might remain unspoken more explicit. The community is not necessarily formal. It can be informal. Having had the same training or sharing of the same school can give birth to a community. The community leaders can apply this logic and promote several events related to the community effect on the managerial decisions.

Managerial decisions

The company as a structure socially organized assumes the definition of procedures of decision-making in a company. This action, based inter alia, on the information held by policymakers allow them to make decisions in line with the objectives of the company (Chen et al. (2016). We can define the decision as "an act by which a decision or operate a choice of several options for a satisfactory solution to a problem."

Types of decisions

Traditionally, there are three main types of decisions to be taken in a company:

Operational decisions: undertake short-term business (under 2 years). Decisions are made by the performers. These decisions are frequent, very predictable.

Tactical decisions: engage medium-term business (2 to 5 years). Decisions are taken by senior frames. These decisions are infrequent, unpredictable.

Strategic decisions: engage the company over a long period of time (over 5 years). Decisions are made by the highest hierarchical level, that is to say, either by the General Management or by the State. These decisions are unique and casual. By strategic decision, we mean the important decisions in terms of the actions of resources used which may affect the health and monitor the organization (Eisenhardt & Zbaracki, 1992).

Ansoff (1981) proposes borders to strategic management, distinguishing strategic and operational decisions. It divides the total space of managerial decisions into three areas: strategy, management, and operations. Andrews considered strategic decisions as essentially external decisions, "concerning the relations of the firm with his entourage," dealing specifically with the selection of products that the company intends to offer and the market it wants to sell into. Rather, operational decisions are of a domestic nature. Their purpose is "to maximize the efficiency of resource utilization process" and specifically with the problems of allocating resources to the various product lines or business units as well as control of the use of these resources".

Company decisions can also be classified into financial and governance decisions (Lorenczik et al., 2017). For financial decisions, we talk about investment and financing decisions.

Investment decisions: according to Gardès (2006), any decision of spending that leads to the acquisition of an asset for obtaining a stream of future cash flow, aimed to increase the wealth of the owners of a company, is an investment. This investment is, thus opposed to the consumption which involves destruction of wealth and loss of value. The definition of investment decisions seems to be very broad, since it allows considering as an investment, all tangible and intangible assets, whether they are industrial, commercial, or financial. Moreover, according to Gardès (2006), the vesting criteria does not cover that of legal ownership. An asset acquired and financed by leasing, and, in general, all leased assets will be considered as investments. From a financial perspective, the rental is only a particular mode of financing investment.

Thus, investment decision is that which aims to increase the wealth of owners, and therefore, the company's value *Liu et al., 2016). Investment decision lead us to talk about divestment decision, a decision identical to that of investment decision. It also seeks to increase the wealth of the owners. There are investments to the extent where cash that could be drawn would receive more profitable allocation, either by being reinvested in the company, or by returning to the capital providers. Finally, the investment decisions affecting the structure of the active portfolio are as follows: fixed assets (tangible assets, intangible, and financial, associated with the operations of investment and held in the main way, most of the time for a long period) and current assets (necessary for the realization of operations of exploitation, where they are subordinate to the existence of fixed assets, because they are their accessories, where they should be considered during the decisions of investment).

Financing decisions: They take into account several types of decisions, such as:

- The choice of distribution between the capital provided by shareholders and creditors. The company needs to tap into the equity or rather resort to debt.

- The relative decision has a dividend policy of the company towards these shareholders: the choice between reinvestment of the surplus of liquid assets and distribution of dividends.
- The choice between internal (self-financing) and external financing.

These decisions, although different from one to another, are all linked. For example, a policy which favours external financing leads to the distribute dividends and not to strengthen the stockholders' equity of the company.

<u>Governance decisions:</u> There are many of these which are mostly decisions concerning internal mechanisms of governance of a company. The mechanisms of governance can also visualize various systems, such as boards of directors, organizational systems, and strategic systems (Lozano et al., 2016; CMA Canada, 2002; Gregory, 2001; Monks & Minow, 2004; Thompson, 2002).

As first, these are all decisions of the board (it is seen as the most important mechanism of governance for the company). So, any decision of the board of directors is that of governance: the type of the board, the roles and responsibilities of the board, board size, the number of committees, the roles and responsibilities of various committees, the committee structure and the independence of committees, the split between internal versus external members, as well as independent members (Brockman et al., 2016).

According to Brouard and Di Vito (2008), the organizational systems represent a second group of mechanisms. Among the variables quoted in the previous studies, let us note the financial, human, and physical resources, organizational structure, organizational leadership, its ethics, the responsibility of the members of council and leaders, the remuneration and evaluation of the performance of leaders and the staff, the disclosure of the organization, risk management, the management of a crises, and the communication of information in the organization. Among these various points relating to organizational systems, there are a significant number of decisions where the manager is asked to take one.

However, there are several strategic systems, the strategic planning, the business model, the risk management, the management of crises, the measurement of performance, the processes of organizational change, the processes of obtaining strategic information (Brouard & Di Vito, 2008). Similar to an organizational system, there is a multitude of decisions where the leader intervenes. To handle general policies, decisions are made by individuals who have both psychological and situational influences. The strategic decision-making process is dependent not only on objective information but also on the knowledge of decision-makers. For some authors, this strategic process is seen as a flow of information and independent decisions of those involved. For others, like Child (1972), the strategy of organizations may be based on leadership selection. They are individuals and not organizations that make decisions, and he claims that the decision-makers have a considerable amount of control over the future direction to be taken by the organization, that is to say, the strategic choices that are different from operational choices, like inventories, credit policies, et cetera. Indeed, writers such as March and Simon argue that the strategy of the firm depends on their choice of leaders. So, these are the leaders of the organizations that make decisions for the strategic direction of the latter.

This decision-making relates to any living organism with a nervous system. It concerns every individual and group. This is a method of reasoning which may be based on rational arguments and/or irrational. Theorists of the Carnegie School March, Simon, Cyert said that complex decisions are the result of behavioural factors, where systematic search for economic optimization is noted. For them, an individual can identify all possible choices, so he chooses the most satisfactory solution and does not maximize the solution.

So, strategic choices have a big behavioural component (the imitation, for example) and it also reflects the idiosyncrasies of the taker of such a decision. The idiosyncratic are set up as soon as the decision-maker is confronted with internal or external stimuli to the organization. So, during decision-making, the leader takes into account not only the financial aspect of the decision but also a multitude of factors that can influence his decision, as he belongs to a leaders' community and all the effects that this can have.

The different effects of leaders' community

The emergence of leaders' community results from the effects that these communities provide (Khan & Peeters, 2016).We belong to a community, where the leader engages in conduct reflecting different theoretical frameworks. Between imitation, learning, and the search for legitimacy, the leader draws from the community in order to deal with the environment and his overall responsibilities. Different behaviours are required by the officers during their managerial decision-making. Having a mimetic behaviour when taking an investment decision, whether financing or governance, or rather make a decision further to set of knowledge learned through the community or rather a search for legitimacy.

In this framework, we try to explain the theoretical foundations of the effects of community leaders. In the first place, we speak of mimicry by defining and explaining its theoretical foundation. In the second place, we speak of organizational learning through these two components (single-loop and double loops) and its impact on decision-making.

Mimicry

Many definitions exist, but we hold that of Lintner (1998), who stipulates that "behavioural finance is the study of the behaviour of the individual, when it is a question of making a decision of investment". One type of decision is faced by the leader of the company. The objective of behavioural finance is the understanding and prediction of the behaviour of the agents on the financial market and the process of taking a decision. We are in search of explanations rather than the definition of rational behaviour of the agent or his decision. Thus, behavioural finance can be seen as the application of psychology to finance.

The communities of the leaders may increase the mimetic behaviour, and, as a consequence, increase the collective cognitive biases of the behavioural finance. This type of bias is a questioning of the initial decision of the decision-maker by aligning itself with the tendency. Belonging to a leaders' community is likely to advance in this manner. This questioning of the decision can have a negative impact when it is contrary to the initial decisions, but it has a positive impact when it conforms with the same decisions.

Mimicry is an imitation of behaviour that can be found in different domains of the living world (Roux et al., 2016). In animals, this is a widespread behavioural instinct, while assuming no conscious activity. Indeed, Henry Bates was the first to use 'mimicry' as a term in 1861 to describe the behaviour of butterflies in the Amazon. He said the mimicry means "The ability of some animals to make an appearance consistent with the objects around them". In human neurobiology, humans are born imitators: several studies about the experiences with infants have shown that new-borns are able to reproduce facial expressions; behaviourally, this is a fundamental mechanism for learning. Anthropologically, René Girard in particular, spoke of the fundamental mechanism of human behaviour and the corporate development factor.

The difference between imitation and limitation amounts to intentionality. Mimicry is an adaptive reflex while limiting reporting to a voluntary behaviour (Pupion & Leroux, 2006). We note, however, that the work on the description of phenomena which is related to limitation in sociology and economy use them in a confused manner. In this chapter, we use the two terms in a confused way as well.

In mimicry, we speak of several concepts. First, we talk of isomorphism, which originated in the work of institutional theory. According to the proponents of this theory, the fundamental concept is the description of the dynamic homogenization organizations, that is, communities, and, in our case, communities of practice. For DiMaggio and Powell (1983), isomorphism identifies the process through which the unity of a population is made to resemble the same environmental conditions units. What allows explaining the behaviour of the leaders further, with regards to their membership to the communities of practice, are what they establish. Dimaggio and Powell (1983) distinguishes three forms of isomorphism: the coercive isomorphism, the normative isomorphism, and the mimetic isomorphism. The latter is the closest to the phenomenon of imitation, which we study within a framework of the effects of communities of leaders.

We speak about the contagion inter-organization (which is very applicable to the members of communities), like for Greve (1998), the contagion occurs between organizations when there is an adoption of a practice by an organization, which increases the preference of this practice by others. So, the practices adopted by a member of the community of leaders increase the preference towards this practice with regards to other members, as what translates as the contagion between members. Then, we speak of benchmarking, which can be defined as the process which consists in identifying, analysing, and adopting, where, by adaptation, they practice through the most successful organizations to improve the performances of its own organization. It does not limit itself to the simple identification of "better practical". He supposes a thorough work of measure of one's own performances than those of reference entities and their implementation in his organization.

Within the framework of communities of leaders, this notion is presented well, where every member of the community tries to identify, analyse, and adopt the best practices to apply them within his organization (Boyer & Jonard, 2014). Although we do not speak here of imitation itself, the benchmarking or the process of calibration would be a good illustration of the practices of imitation between companies, which are most of the time concerned with a process or a specific practice. It also establishes a tool, which, in an environment with increasing competition, stresses upon the mimetic behaviour.

Explanation

The type of herd behaviour is strategic, as it allows facing less risk while being in the same position as those who have made the decision earlier. Mimicry helps to address problems based on a repertoire of knowledge established within the community. Mimetic behaviour can have negative effects in the case of uncertainty and lack of information, especially for the role of the community with regards to the exchange and sharing of information and knowledge. Thus, the relationships that sustain different community members reduce uncertainty and improve confidence among members, thereby mimicking the role of allowing leaders to have the opportunity to benefit from experiences of each other.

Several empirical studies now have returned to the mimetic behaviour of organizations, and therefore, communities with these forms of organizations. Thus, there are studies on the mimetic behaviour in the choice of acquisition strategies (Haunscild, 1993), in input decisions on new markets (Demil & Lecocq, 2006; Haveman, 1993), choosing a diversification decision (Fligstein 1991), in the choice of banking investment (Haunschild & Miner, 1997), the adoption of market position (Greve, 2005), formation of alliances in the auto industry (Garcia & Nohria, 2002), introduction of a new product (Asaba & Lieberman, 1999; Davis 1991), or the adoption of a new organizational shape (Lee & Pennings, 2002).

Institutional neo-theory offers the most exploited scene in the understanding of certain organizational behaviours related to mimicry. The basic idea of institutional theory is the fact that organizations adapt not only to internal constraints, but also the values of external companies. The new institutionalists try to describe the processes that transforms practices and organizations into institutions. Richard Scott defines institutionalization as the process through which actions are repeated, and give, by this very fact, a similar meaning to other actions.

This theory posits that organizations operating in the same field tend to develop common standards which become increasingly complex, and so, must gradually acquire similar behaviour. This is equivalent to the existence of either explicit rules or laws that ensure the convergence mechanism or usual activities strained by norms, values, and expectations, which may be cultural, or even, be similar to others. Institutional theory uses this term to describe this isomorphism convergence which results from imitation.

Isomorphism is considered by the followers of institutional neo-theory as the concept which is best suited to the description of homogenization dynamics. It identifies the process by which the unity of a population may resemble the units facing the same environmental conditions (Huault, 2002).

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) states that mimetic isomorphism results from the desire to be like other organizations. This is an imitation of the companies by implementing the practices of others, those which are most identifiable, those with the best performing competitors, or those considered to be legitimate in a field. Company officials are allegiant to the leaders of the community, with the opportunity to imitate other leaders who are performing "whose business is performing), where they can, through the exchange and sharing that is established within the community, identify the most effective practices, and therefore, adapt them. The obligation of facing uncertainty lead managers to adopt a mimetic behaviour. Moricou (2010) presents a summary table of the studies relating to the strategy for mimicry.

Table 2: The imitation in strategy, an empirical reality

Field of strategy concerned	Emblematic work
Competitive positioning	US radio imitates whether to adopt a new competitive positioning (format), or decide abandoning the old (Greve, 1995, 1996, 1998).
Scope of business	Diversification strategies of Chinese pharmaceutical companies are, for Vermeulen and Wang (2005), largely defined by imitation. Palmer and Barber (2001) formed their return on US firms' diversification strategies during the sixties. The pioneers are often businesses run by persons not belonging to the "system." In terms of diversification, companies imitated models that belonged to their social network.
Choice of location	As Henisz and Delios showed (2001), Japanese multinationals tend to imitate the most frequently made choice (especially when the models belong to the same industry). The least-experienced organizations have often resorted to imitation than the others.

Field of strategy concerned	Emblematic work
Terms of development	On decisions of alliance, Garcia-Pont and Nohria (2002) point to the existence of an imitation between car manufacturers. The imitation is particularly pronounced among the competitors positioned in the same market niche. Concerning mergers and acquisitions, Stearns and Allan (1996) explained the wave of mergers among US companies (beginning of the eighties) by imitation. The movement was initiated by marginal organizations (in terms of social status), which then would be institutionalized through a snowball effect.

In their studies, Haunschild and Miner (1997) have tried to highlight the different forms of mimicry that can be adopted by companies. According to them, there are three forms of mimicry:

- Imitation based on frequency: companies imitate the solution adopted by the largest number of competitor companies. This behaviour may be established by the leaders who are members of a community, and with the exchange and sharing, the imitation becomes increasingly easier.
- Imitation based on results: According to Mouricou (2010), companies imitate the amounts paid as a part of operations, that is seen as a good result.
- Imitation based on the characteristics of a model: Imitate "organizations answering certain criteria such as the size or the geographical proximity" (Mouricou, 2010).

According to Mouricou (2010), we can find a multitude of reasons to explain imitation. "It may well be to neutralize competitors (Porter, 1982 [2004]), to reduce the advance of these (Garcia-Pont & Nohria, 2002), to hedge possible sanctions that could emanate from stakeholders (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), to reduce its own costs of research and development or take advantage of the education work carried consumers by innovators (Golder & Telis, 1993; Lieberman & Montgomery, 1998; Schnaars, 1994)." Added to this there are personal interests. According to Scharfstein and Stein (1990), stakeholders in the financial markets would tend to imitate each other to dilute their own responsibility in case of failure (sharing the blame effect).

Finally, mimicry is a behaviour that occurs widely within the community leaders while making managerial decisions. Faced with a situation of uncertainty, leaders seek to imitate the decisions of each other. Imitation is a solution in the managerial decision-making, where a choice of investment can be only made by adopting a mimetic behaviour of others. This mimetic behaviour can explain a dividend policy, and also a financing strategy.

Organizational learning

According to Dorvilier (2007), learning outside its domain of study in particular is psychology-based (cognitive psychology, educational psychology), and it has raised, in the recent years, a great deal of interest in other disciplines, such as management, economics, and sociology. For Chrysostom and Zhan (2001), these currents constitute of irrefutable proof of the ambiguity of the learning concept.

Despite the consensus around the importance of the practice of organizational learning, researchers have struggled to agree upon a common definition of the phenomenon. Based on an article by Fillol (2006) and Dorvilier (2007), there are various definitions:

Table 3: Various definitions of organizational learning

Authors	Definitions
Cyert & March (1963)	Organizational learning is an adaptation of the organization to its environment.
Fiol & Lyles (1985)	A process improvement action through new knowledge for a comprehensive understanding of the company and environment.
Levitt & March (1988)	The process by which organizations codify the interference of the past and turn them into routines. To learn, the organization must incorporate the consequences of history with its procedures.
Senge (1990)	In learning organizations, individuals are constantly improving their ability to create desired results, new ways of thinking, and develop continuously the collective visions, which give a wide margin of freedom, where individuals constantly learn how to better learn together.
Weick & Roberts (1993)	The process through which interactions between individuals are multiplied and coordinated.
Koenig (1994)	Collective process of acquisition and development of skills that, more or less deeply and permanently can change management situations and the situations themselves.
Ingham (1994)	Social process of interaction for individuals who have a purpose and results in the production of new organizational knowledge, that is, either knowledge or expertise.
Tarondeau (1998)	This is a collective phenomenon, because it assumes that the acquisition of knowledge, even though 'it is strictly individual, has an impact on the organization or several of its members.
Leroy (1998)	Learning can be understood as a behavioural adjustment of the organization in response to the changes in the environment, such as a transformation of the organizational body of knowledge or as an interaction between individuals within the organization.

Dorvilier (2007) states that the emphasis in these definitions is placed either on the learning object (information, knowledge, behaviours, representations, and representation structures and actions), or on the subject of learning (individuals, specific groups, or entire organizations), or on the learning trigger (error, poor performance, innovation, change in the external environment), or on the lens (via improved routine organizational, imitation, organizational innovation, reflection on the modes of action, interaction and socialization, codification, and storage). The definition which we retain is inspired by the definitions of Koenig (1994) and Ingham (1994), who stipulated that learning is a collective phenomenon of acquisition and elaboration of skills, which, more or less profoundly and durably, modifies the management of situations and the situations themselves, through the means of interactions between individuals.

Learning level

For Argyris and Donald (1978-1996), there are two levels of learning: the "single-loop learning" and "double loop learning ".

The single loop learning (behavioural learning):

It is seen as a shared review of knowledge that does not require a change of mental models. It is called "single-loop learning" by Argyris and Schon (1978); "Adaptive learning" by (Senge, 1990); "Behavioral development" by Fiol and Lyles (1985), and finally, "operational learning" by Kim (1993). According to Chrysostome and Zhan (2001), in this type of learning, people learn by expanding from their experiences and observations of events, concepts and models which they test, subsequently using them to solve problems of their organizations.

According to Leroy (2000), single-loop learning increases the stability of the organization and reduces variability in behaviour, and there is a little bit of innovative learning and the ability to transform an organization.

The double-loop learning (cognitive learning):

This is seen as a shared review of knowledge that requires a reconsideration of the existing mental models and replacing them with new mental models. It is noted by Bateson (1972) in "learning second order" and Senge (1990) "generator or productive learning" for Fiol and Lyles (1985) "cognitive development", and is also called "conceptual learning" by Kim (1993). According to Leroy (2000); the double loop learning is innovative and looks to the exploration and creation of knowledge.

1. The leaders community instead of single-loop learning:

The community of leaders is composed of individuals with common practices and regular communication between them. According to Merindol (2007), the objective is to develop the skills of an exercise of the practice in question. They are the only modes of social interaction, allowing both to confront considered legitimate practices and solve complex problems in order to instill new entrants' essential knowledge which is related to their new activities. For Brown and Duguid (1991), within the communities of knowledge, there is some is essential "know-how".

Brown and Duguid (1991) added that a community promotes an adaptive learning mode. Merindol (2007), enabled communities to build, strengthen, and sustain the skills necessary for the exercise of the practice in question.

2. The leaders' community instead of double-loop learning:

An environment of trust is created within the executive community promotes learning. Turcot and Jacob (2000) considered that the higher the level of confidence in an organization, the more tacit knowledge is shared, and these become an asset for solving complex problems. Confidence is a factor that makes people talk, and the more we trust, the more likely we are to tell their problems and explain worries, and the more we trust, the more we tend to talk with others, trying to find a solution. According to Deschyver (2006), the climate of trust is necessary for mutual commitment of community members. To this add Gherardi and Nicolini's (2000) comment, that this commitment is important to acquire skills.

According to Prax (2001), a community of practice is usually a place where there is a good level of confidence. According to Wyss (1999), confidence level allows the development of a mind to go for double loop learning. Fillol's (2004) interactions and sharing of practices and simple loop learning within a community of practice allows knowledge to be shared and disseminated, and it is this sharing that induces double loop learning.

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Argyris and Shon (1995), consider that the skill mix of community members is growing thanks to the double-loop learning. Thus according to Coudel, Barrel and Rey-Valette (2007), in response to the collective nature of competencies from the single-loop learning to foster a collective cognitive process that allows the acquisition of a collective dimension. This dimension, described by Argyris (1995) "double loop learning" to switch from individual knowledge juxtaposed collective knowledge.

For Codello-Guijarro (2004), within the community, each of the actors in presence will have participated in the construction, even in the transformation of a directory of knowledge which detains all members. Barlatier (2002) specify that the learning in double-loop can be based on a combination of processes, which corresponds to a systematization of the explicit concepts in a system of knowledge. This is about the creation of a particular type of explicit knowledge by selection, reconfiguration, and modification of other forms of explicit knowledge. However, Ben Chouikha (2007) states that the media can be used for the creation of such knowledge, which can be very different: documents, meetings, conversations, and information technology and communication. These supports are seen as a means to strengthen and transform the communities of practice.

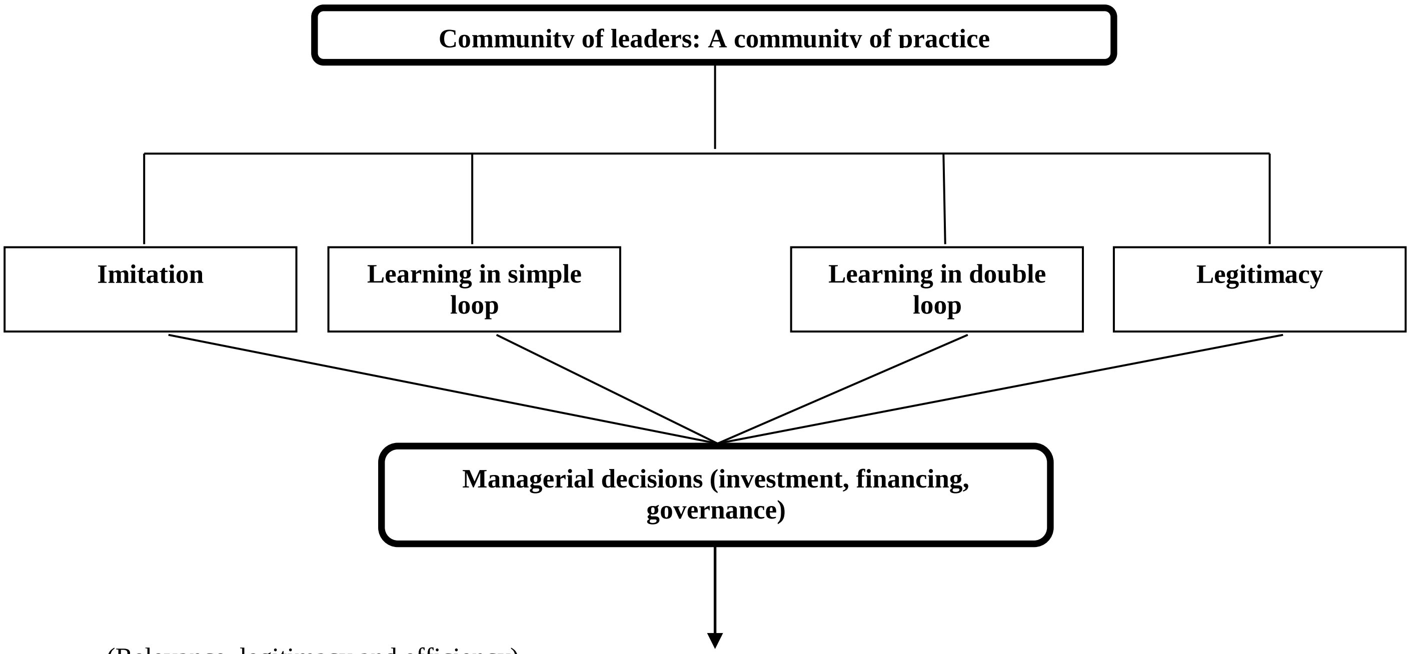
Legitimacy

According to the neo-institutional approach, the existence of a company in an environment gives an idea about what organizations should look like and how they should behave. They actually tend to develop common standards and similar behaviour by adopting certain ones in order, the legitimate desire to be with their peers, and whatever the nature of the constraints that lead to converge these common standards (Durocher et al., 2016). Legitimacy is a goal sought increasingly by leaders. Legitimizing their choices and decisions, by facing shareholders and stakeholders is a goal that every leader tries to have. This legitimacy can reduce the pressure put on the leaders. Belonging to a community of leaders can reduce bonds, since they will tap into the decisions taken by these pairs.

Thus, and in many situations, firms in the same organizational field do not act for reasons like efficiency or search for optimum solutions, but, rather to comply with institutional pressures that lead them to adopt similar organizational models (Killian & O'Regan, 2016).

Indeed, from identified isomorphism, it may be noted that the goal is to award the social legitimacy needed to continue existing in an environment, and the process that will bring business to this social legitimacy is the fact which can help integrate and adapt to certain standards, and thus, converge with the same practices to adopt a mimetic behaviour by copying each other. Legitimacy is a concern for the leaders (O'Dwyer et al., 2011). The community of leaders is a place that fosters legitimacy through the answers it provides to its members. This is reflected on the level of managerial decisions from a legitimate decision, which is neither more effective nor efficient. Here, leaders seek to legitimize their investment decisions, financing, as well as governance. The decision to reduce or increase the size of a board can be explained as a search for legitimacy.

Drawing on various theoretical concepts, one can note the theoretical model showing the influence of the process of community practices across all managerial decisions.



(Relevance, legitimacy and efficiency)

Leaders' community influence on managerial decisions processes

Conclusion

A knowledge economy that is increasingly accentuated, by not only looking for single goal efficiency, but rather for learning and legitimacy increasingly enhanced. The effects of such a community could change the way of seeing an officer's decision. The leaders' community may be seen as a determining factor when making decisions indirectly via its effects.

Through this research, our goal was to analyse by following a number of relationships and the process through which leaders' community affect managerial decision-making. The main point of this study was to consider the leaders' community as a place to develop several behaviours of individual member (mimicry, organizational learning, and legitimacy). The central idea is that the effects of the community became a determining factor in the decision. Thus, the leaders' community emerged as a form of interactive organization, which constituted of a particular context of mimicry, organizational learning, and the search for legitimacy.

We have detected mimicry as a probable behaviour of the community members to deal with uncertainty and benefit from the experience of other members. It was also announced that the leaders' community is a place that promotes organizational single-loop learning, but is also in double loop. Finally, it was found that the leaders' community allow its members to justify their peers, but also towards all other stakeholders.

Our research has helped clarify one's understanding about the presence of the leaders' community within the company. We clarified this topic by grouping several classical and contemporary theoretical perspectives, including that of behavioural and institutional. A literature review allowed us to identify the notions of community leaders, mimicry, organizational learning, and the legitimacy of all managerial decisions. Indeed, existing research does not mention the interest of the leaders' community as a key factor in the company. Our research has built a management framework that aims to propose different ways of improving managerial decision-making.

As part of the future work, it would be interesting to empirically test our theoretical model. We have proposed a design for the implementation of this research through empirical modeling, which is based on the qualitative research method. This is based on semi-structured interviews with leaders as the primary data collection source.

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